

## **Holme Annual Parish Meeting**

### **AGM**

#### **COUNTY COUNCILLOR SIMON BYWATER April 2024**

I am continually amazed by the unwavering dedication of our local voluntary groups who continuously step up to support individuals and communities within our area. To each and every one of you, I extend my heartfelt gratitude.

Since my last annual update, it has been a bustling year, marked by the recent budget decisions made by both Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) and Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), reflecting in the council tax bills you've recently received. Regrettably, both councils opted for the maximum increase in their portions of the council tax bills. Considering the financial strains many households face, I could not in good conscience support this decision by the joint administrations. I also stand firmly against the 200% increase in the Mayor's precept for residents, and I remain sceptical about how this will genuinely enhance bus services for all of us in this part of North West Cambridgeshire.

I wish to draw attention to a recent CCC budget vote concerning the allocation of funds for Highways Maintenance. Despite efforts to boost the budget by an additional £21million, the proposed budget amendment I endorsed was unfortunately not approved. This decision was made by the Liberal Democrat, Labour, Independent coalition-led administration. It's disheartening to note that this coalition has consistently opposed increased funding for Highways Maintenance over the past three years, despite the urgent need for improved road repairs and the very Cambridge City centric led approach the CCC has.

I acknowledge that many of you have observed the deteriorating state of our roads and the perceived lack of accountability from contractors. It's clear that there are issues surrounding the allocation and management of funds. Despite significant frustrations, I have achieved some local victories in ensuring the treatment and repair of certain roads and pavements. However, it remains an ongoing battle to ensure our voices are heard and that our local roads, as well as areas under the responsibility of the County Council, receive the necessary attention.

I urge you to continue reporting any highways issues to the CCC, as your feedback is invaluable in addressing these concerns. You can report any highways issue here <https://highwaysreporting.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/>

Throughout the year, I've engaged with a diverse range of individuals, partners, and stakeholders to ensure both councils are striving to deliver their best for our communities. This includes my work on the Fire Authority.

Rest assured, I am committed to persistently working at the local level, advocating for residents, and especially ensuring that the joint administrations overseeing our councils are held accountable.

## **District Cllr Tim Alban**

Most, if not all district councillors might say the same but I really do think the Stilton, Folksworth & Washingley ward is one of the most special in the Huntingdonshire District.

There is a mix of villages with their own charm, as well as their own challenges but we also have areas and issues in common; it is with that in mind that, along with my fellow ward councillor, Marge Beuttell, I have organised joint meetings for the Chairs and Clerks from the various parish councils and parish meetings.

The first was held in Holme, with the most recent two being held in the Milestone Hotel at Norman Cross, where we have received presentations from Huntingdonshire District Council's Chief Planning Officer and representatives of Cambridgeshire Police.

Most importantly though, these meetings continue to provide an opportunity to meet with each other, to share common problems and exchange ideas; I am pleased that Marge and I have been supported in this by County Councillors Simon Bywater and Ian Gardener. I am also pleased that Holme has been represented at each of these meetings.

Our next meeting will hopefully be in the autumn, where I intend to invite a representatives from the district council's Operations team to discuss the changes in the garden waste collections. Speaking of which...

I have received direct correspondence and seen comments on social media about the changes, most - although not all - have been negative. Without being too political, I feel it appropriate to confirm that I don't think there was a need to introduce a green bin charge and didn't vote for it; that said it was democratically voted for by the majority of elected district councillors and the changes have been made.

The new arrangements, including the introduction of alternative arrangements, such as the once a month Saturday Freighter service, have prompted further comments (particularly about communication) and I continue to follow these up with council officers.

Anyone, whether they have paid the green bin charge or not, can take their garden bin to be emptied at a specified location, on a Saturday morning once a month; the nearest for Holme are Stilton, Yaxley and Sawtry.

Planning issues, especially those relating to the development sites on Pingle Bank and Yaxley Road continue to keep me busy. At the time of writing, I am waiting for an update on both these sites and will provide an update when I am able.

From the fens in the East to the Huntingdonshire Wolds in the West, and from Little Gidding in the South to the river Nene in the North, the Stilton, Folksworth & Washingley ward is one of the largest in the Huntingdonshire District and I continue to enjoy working with Marge to represent the people who live here. With such a side area, Marge focusses on the North and I focus on the South - including Holme; to contact me, please email me via [tim.alban@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:tim.alban@huntingdonshire.gov.uk) or call 07903 518967

### Holme Parish News (HPN) – Louise Roderick Smith

The last year has seen me take over from Barbara who we can all agree did an excellent job for over 20 years so a big thank you to Barbara. The HPN is still delivered to approximately 300 homes in the Parish and we are grateful to those that contribute to the editions with their articles to keep us updated as to what is happening. If anyone knows of any other groups that would like to add something please encourage them to send something in.

If there is any feedback on the editions please make contact to me directly rather than any social media. My contact details are in the directory.

A big thank you also goes to the school who print the HPN and also to those who deliver the editions.

### Holme Reading Trust – Ed on behalf of Jenny Whittaker

The Holme Reading Trust continues to support local good causes. During the last financial year we have supported applications from;

- Holme Village News (£500) - contribution to printing costs of the village magazine
- Holme Youth club (£350) - contribution to provision of wooden furniture / security barriers
- Friends of Holme School (£649.46) - contribution to provision of school benches

The Trust is keen to support good causes locally and enhance the lives of villagers in Holme.

### HSMBC – send apologies

**Holme Short Mat Bowls club** meet at the Holme Village Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, 7:30 to 9:30, from mid September through to mid/late April. We are a friendly club where everyone is welcomed regardless of whether they are complete beginners or experienced bowlers. Club nights are split into two sessions with a short break between the two sessions for tea, coffee and biscuits.

For members looking for more competitive bowling, the club enters a team in the Cambridgeshire Short Mat Bowls leagues. Members can also enter a number of competitions or events organised by Cambridgeshire Short Mat Bowls Association.

The Club have welcomed a few new members in 2023/2024 but we would like more people to join us to secure the future of the club. It is disappointing that the residents of Holme now make up less than 25% of the membership whereas when the club was formed over 75% of members were Holme residents. Without the continued support of members who live in the surrounding area Holme Short Mat Bowls club would not exist.

We would like to thank the Village Hall Committee for their continued support.

Anyone interested in trying short mat bowling or joining the club can obtain more information by emailing [holmesmbc.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:holmesmbc.secretary@gmail.com). The first 3 sessions are free of charge. Contact details are also available in the Holme Parish Newsletter.

Peter Dickman

Club Secretary

## **HOLME COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH**

Holme Community Speedwatch has been running now in excess of 15 years and shows a certain amount of success in our aim to educate drivers to adhere to the speed limit through our village. We go very excited when we had our first NIL return but sadly it was a one off and we are once again recording speeds above the limit although its well below the 50% rate when we started.

Details of speeders are passed on to the police who send out letters pointing out to the drivers that they exceeded the speed limit and asking them not to in future.

The level crossing, the bad weather and unexpected road closures have played havoc with our activities just lately but we persevere and try to fit in one session a week.

We currently have 18 active volunteers but are always happy to add more so if you feel you can spare an hour or so a month, at a time convenient to you please get in touch and we will get you trained up and out on the road with our cheerful bunch of volunteers.

## **HOLME YOUTH CLUB**

This time last year we were turning members away as we were going over our maximum attendance - this year has seen number fall to single figures. We have no idea why but we go no new members on our taster days last June. We will continue in the hope that numbers increase and we get some new members coming in this June. We do our best to advertise the facility but paper letters are no longer sent home with the children from school so perhaps they are not getting to know about it.

We had a visit to Fenland Aqua Park last July which was hit by a sudden storm and all the inflatables took off across the water so a rerun was made in September and although 10 people didn't attend for it a great time was had by all. Our night out in December had only 3 attending and as we didn't take enough to cover the rent last term we didn't go anywhere.

We still charge the same entrance fee as we have done for the last 10 or more years and hopefully numbers will increase and the years 5-10 will come back.

We are very grateful to the half dozen members who have continued to attend despite reaching the maximum age limit and help out in the tuck shop. Its lovely to know they are volunteering to help our volunteers.

We currently have 5 adult members who do not have children in membership age range but they come along on a very regular basis to supervise – We are always grateful to any volunteers as we couldn't run the facility without them.

### **Holme Village hall**

Holme Village Hall is still being well used. The Village pre school is there all day Monday to Friday during term time. The Bowls club use it Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and Youth club on a Friday night. A steady number of private bookings continue to use the hall at weekends and in the holidays for parties, gatherings and meetings. The hall can be booked in part or as a whole depending on what is needed.

We had hoped to refurbish the kitchen last summer holidays but it proved too difficult to find a contractor that wanted to do the job. We are still hopeful and searching to do it this year.

Richard Knight has been on the committee for 30 years and chair for 13 of those. He decided this year that it was time to step down. We thank him greatly for the grand job he has done over this time. I seem to have found myself in his place although I'm not planning on the same length of tenure! We welcomed Steve Arbutt to our committee this year, so nice to have someone volunteer to join us and help keep the village hall running.

*Trudi Smith, Chair Holme Village Hall*

### **Sir John Cotton Charities**

The Educational foundation receives a sum from the Flitwick trust to distribute to individuals in Holme Parish, who are going on to further studies or an educational activity. A set percentage is also given to the church. This year we were able to help 6 university students and one other at school for an educational activity. These are awarded on application.

Notices are put in the parish news and on notice boards around the village at the beginning of the school year. Holme Charity Lands was set up in 1869 to support those in need in the parish of Holme. It owns a small plot of land and the rental income creates the fund to be distributed. It is a contribution to help with heating bills and to those who need a little support. The trustees meet in early November to discuss the distribution of the funds. To help us in our decision, a letter is placed in the parish news in October to ask for applicants. This explains how to contact the charity to be considered for this support.

*Trudi Smith, Chair Holme Charity Lands*



2023 has been an important year for St. Giles Holme. During the year after the heating breaking down. The Heating and lighting project was created to bring the adequate electrical supply into the building to enable the introduction of the first phase of specialist heating and improved lighting. I am delighted to confirm that the first phase of Heating and Lighting in the church building started late 2023 and completed in April 2024.

With all historic buildings there is continual work required for upkeep and maintenance. St. Giles is no different and we seek to ensure the church building and community is sustained for generations to come as a place of worship for Holme.

In 2023 other significant events took place:

- The Benefice of Sawtry, Glatton and Holme was renamed The Fen Edge Churches.
- It was announced that Reverend Diane Kutar would complete her curacy with us in the early part of 2024 and would become Rector of 'The Stilton Group'.
- We launched 'Youth Space' on Sunday evenings – at All Saints' Sawtry
- We supported the launch of Coffee Ark and look forward to seeing them venture into Holme in May 2024.

St. Giles is for the benefit of the whole community and we are delighted that Holme Primary Academy embraces the church as part of the family and we do so in return. This is done through regular use of the church building, connection through collective worship and engagement in lessons and school life.

I have the pleasure of being in school regularly, have the role of vice-chair of governors and have enjoyed joining the pupils on school trips...To Hamerton Zoo and most recently the Peterborough Museum.

Our current service pattern is: 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday 9am plus the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday afternoon for Coffee and Cake from 2:30pm and a very short service at 4:30pm. From May Coffee Ark will be in residence on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Coffee and Cake.

As expressed in the last Holme parish news and worth repeating again. I give personal thanks to our PCC members and especially our Church Warden Judith Osborne for her dedication and care for St. Giles as a church building and community. St. Giles' rich history and heritage oozes from every pew and brick, individuals working together have resourced this church building and community and I always love hearing the stories from people who recall fondly their engagement with the church. St. Giles offers a warm welcome to all our services. You can expect singing hymns, saying prayers, listening to the bible, a short talk plus refreshments and a space for young children to be comfortable and at ease.

Huge Blessings,

Reverend Canon Becky Dyball [revdyball@gmail.com](mailto:revdyball@gmail.com) [www.fenedgechurches.org](http://www.fenedgechurches.org)

## **Holme C of E Primary Academy**

### **School Context**

Total number of pupils on roll – 115

Where do the children come from? Holme, Yaxley, Sawtry, Connington and Stilton

We continue to be rated as Good by Ofsted (last inspected in October 2023) and Outstanding for our SIAMs (in January 2018).

### **Staffing structure**

Executive Headteacher – Mrs Clara King

Assistant Headteacher – Mrs Charlene Ferrara

SENDCo – Mrs Rachael Weeks

Class Teachers – Mrs Banner, Mrs Barnard, Miss Weeks and Miss Williams

Teaching Assistants - 5

School Secretary – Mrs Pilarski

Site Manager – Mr Adcock

Cleaning Staff – 1

Kitchen Staff (Aspens) – 2

Wrap Around Care Staff (Breakfast and After School Clubs) - 2

Chair of Governors – Mr Iain Fairlie

Vice Chair of Governors – Reverend Canon Becky Dyball

Total number of Governors – 9 plus Executive Head Teacher (Joint Governance with Stilton C of E Primary Academy)

### **Staffing update**

Since the last annual parish report we have had very few changes in the staffing department, however we have had one very significant change. Our wonderful Mrs Holmes who was our School Secretary for many, many years departed from her role at the beginning of June last year. As you will all know, Mrs Holmes was the face and heart of the school for a long time and it was a very emotional day when it came to saying our fond farewells. Life in a small school is a very busy one on any day, but Mrs Holmes always maintained a friendly, positive outlook and seemed to take on many tasks without so much as a flutter ensuring that our school ran smoothly and all were in the loop on what is taking place. Although we know that Mrs Holmes will always be a part of our school family, it was a very big hole that was left to fill. We have been extremely lucky in being able to reappoint for the position, with Mrs Pilarski joining the team at the end of the term. Mrs Holmes very kindly supported the transition and it feels like Mrs Pilarski has been with us much longer than she has – we are so grateful for her knowledge and expertise, joining us from a fellow Trust school.

### **Teaching and Learning.**



In October, we had our visit from Ofsted which was very successful. We are pleased with our 'Good' rating and the strengths that they highlighted across the school. This included our fantastic knowledge rich curriculum and the support we give to our children.

Something that we have been working on developing further is our offer in Music and PE. Our PE Lead, Mrs Ferrara, has been tirelessly working on adding extra opportunities into the timetable, enabling every year group to have the opportunity to take part in a range of sporting activities and events throughout the year. This is something that the school has been particularly proud of in the past and we are so happy with the progress the children have been making in developing our skills, enthusiasm and resilience playing in local competitions. Silverware is not far away...we can feel it! Alongside the PE, we made a change in our offer for Music this year bringing this in line with our other foundation subjects to create a more knowledge rich curriculum. This has again been very successful and we are excited to see the impact of this as the children move through the school, being able to learn and remember more.

### **Additional updates**

We have received over 30 applications for our Reception class for next academic year and with 17 places being offered as per our PAN. Our school continues to grow and develop and it is positive to see the school continue to be popular in the local communities we serve.

Our FoHS have continued to support the school amazingly well. They have supported in refreshments at many of the events we have held over the year, held discos, world book day events, mothers and father day event's and they paid for a huge inflatable for the children to enjoy at the Festival of Fun, which was very much loved by all, just to name a few of the things they have done for us. There has been a change of leadership within the team with the outgoing chair, Rebekah, who worked incredibly hard for many years in the role to provide fun and support alongside the school which we are so grateful for. From September, a new chair was appointed, Amanda, who has ensured that the fun has continued into this academic year with additional events and ideas added to the calendar. We are extremely grateful for our FoHS and thankful to them for all of the support they give us. Without their financial support, we wouldn't be able to do everything we do. Funds raised have gone towards supporting school events such as pantomime performances, visitors into school, resources for the curriculum, classroom budgets to support redeveloping areas and even to support new furniture for our playground. We have many more projects planned, so watch this space!

Alongside fundraising and events from our FoHS, this year we have continued to be creative in supporting our own in school fundraising too. We had a very successful Christmas Fair which was great fun and enjoyed by all who took part. More recently, we have held a sponsored sports event linked with the Peterborough Phantoms who donated family tickets to all that took part. The money raised from these events have/will be used to support purchase of additional resources, opportunities and creative spaces across our school for the benefit of all children. We would like to thank everyone who has come along, donated or supported these events as they make such a difference to what we are able to do in school.

Finally, we would like to thank our local community for all of their support again in the last year. We have continued to work with our community and families with areas of need, such as encouraging families to park considerably and sensibly. We would like to thank Reverend Canon Becky Dyball for her continued support from the church. The Christingle and Easter services they supported us with this year were like no other, so thank you for keeping the fun alive for the children.